



Colleton Soil & Water Conservation District

Annual Report 2013~2014



531 Robertson Blvd, Suite B, Walterboro, SC

August 2014

Board of Commissioners

Gary S. Herndon, Chair
Joshua B. Jones Vice Chair
Cleveland C. Hiott III, Secretary/Treasurer
I. M. Benton, Commissioner
Roger L. Harriett, Commissioner
Reverend Gerald T. Mabry, Chaplain

Staff

Sharon Hrvol, Administrative Assistant
SC Department of Natural Resources
Marc L. Cribb, Program Manager
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Fred Tritapoe, District Conservationist
Eddie Mitchell, Soil Conservation Tech.

The Colleton Soil & Water Conservation District is governed by a five-member board of commissioners, two are appointed by the state, and three are elected in the general election. The conservation district works closely with federal and state partners to provide assistance in natural resources conservation in Colleton County. USDA-NRCS provides technical support and SCDNR provides educational support.

2013 Conservationist of the Year ~ John H. Barnes

What began as a vision by Mr. Corey Key in 1960 for improving life for a small farming community in the western part of Colleton County evolved into a conservation project that has benefited numerous family farmers and landowners for more than 40 years. The need to reduce flooding and provide drainage for roads, fields, pastures and woodlands in order that farmers could successfully grow and harvest their crops and manage timber lands was the primary purpose of the Willow Swamp Water Shed Drainage Project.

Mr. John H. Barnes was one of the many men who had a hand in making this vision a reality. He has given 50 years of service to the Willow Swamp Water Shed Project and the communities that benefited from this endeavor by serving as one of the original directors and Chairman for many years.

John Holland Barnes was born and raised on a farm in the Wesley Chapel Community of Colleton County. Like many of his neighbors he faced the hardships of the Depression era where he gained a respect for the land which provided them with food, fiber and means of making a living. He learned that if you take care of the land it would take care of you. He attended school in Ashton and Lodge, where he graduated in 1945 just in time for World War Two. Upon graduation he joined the Merchant Marines and saw maritime service throughout the remainder of the war. He also served in the United States Army with the Occupation Forces in Japan. After being honorably discharged from service he attended the University of South Carolina in Columbia for a brief period before returning to the family farm. In 1951 he married Emily Mell Berry Barnes. They have two sons Marion and Robert and a daughter-in-law, Carmen. He has one grandson, Jacob who is a sophomore at Clemson University majoring in agriculture.



Mr. John Barnes and Chairman Rizer

He was employed by E.I DuPont de Nemours Company and Westinghouse Corporation for more than 39 years at the Savannah River Site (SRS) near Aiken S.C. While employed at SRS, he continued to farm where he raised beef cattle, hogs, row crops and timber to support his family. He utilized numerous conservation practices such as conservation tillage, cover crops to enhance fertility, wind and soil erosion reduction practices as recommended by the NRCS, formerly the Soil Conservation Service. After his retirement from Savannah River Site he continued to farm for several years and planted a large garden from which he shared the bounty with family, friends and neighbors. Many

folks still remember the Crimson Sweet watermelons he produced and sold at the Walterboro Farmers Market.

Of all his accomplishments, his most memorable is the time and efforts he gave to the Willow Swamp Water Shed project as director and chairman. This project, which began construction in 1970 and was completed in 1974, consists of 36.1 miles of drainage canals in upper Colleton and lower Bamberg counties and encompasses 36,000 acres of land which benefit from flood control. Completion of this project addressed not only drainage and flooding issues faced by farmers but also helped eliminate standing water that was conducive to mosquito breeding and septic tank issues faced on farmsteads. He attended numerous planning meetings, traveled to Washington D.C. in support of the project and fielded numerous calls and complaints related to the project throughout the years. The Willow Swamp Water Shed project was not accepted by some landowners initially. Many including some of his own family members did not want to see their taxes increased or have their timber cut to accommodate canal rights-of-ways on their property. However, through efforts by Chairman Barnes, his fellow directors, Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners and the Soil Conservation Service understanding the benefits of the project for farmers and the communities in the project area, the project finally became a reality in 1974.

For his service to the Willow Swamp Water Shed he was named Watershed Conservationist of the Year in 1986 by the S.C. Association of Conservationists and the Land Resources Commission. It is only fitting that the legacy of John Holland Barnes include the Willow Swamp Water Shed Project and the numerous benefits it still provides today to farmers and landowners in Colleton and Bamberg counties. The importance of this project was once again highlighted during the 2013 growing season when over 60 inches of rainfall were received in parts of Colleton County. Without the Willow Swamp Water Shed project, farmers and landowners would have suffered far, far greater losses.

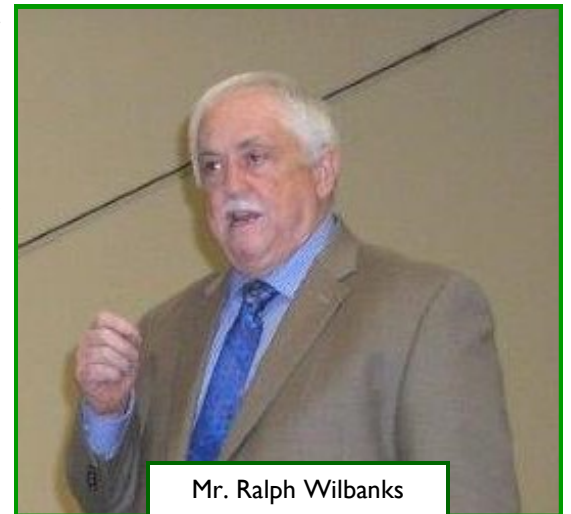
It is with great pleasure that we recognize John Holland Barnes as the "2013 Colleton Soil and Water Conservation District's Conservationist of the Year".

Ralph Wilbanks ~ Banquet Speaker

Ralph Wilbanks was raised on a barrier island in South Carolina, and grew up watching the ocean and Sea Hunt. In high school his goal was to be an underwater archaeologist.

Wilbanks served from 1975 until 1984 as Assistant Underwater Archaeologist for the State of South Carolina. Under the leadership of Alan Albright, formerly of the Smithsonian, he helped establish the first state regulations for protection and preservation of South Carolina's abundant trove of underwater fossils and artifacts.

In 1984 he left government work to go into contract archaeology. Having been involved with both the initial cultural resource preservation movement and the advent of various technological developments, he pioneered new ways to use the new technology to improve the ability to search in dark waters for lost articles, and to definitively map the articles location to enable the return to the precise location for recovery, advanced exploration, and other purposes.



Mr. Ralph Wilbanks

The procedures Wilbanks developed and used for locating and mapping cultural resource targets have also proved useful in other industries. Today, about half of the Wilbanks work is for the discovery of cultural resources, and the remaining work is for various industries associated with marine environments including insurance companies and the government.

Since 1994 he has been an Underwater Archaeologist with the National Underwater and Marine Agency (NUMA) and is on their board of Directors. NUMA, founded by Dr. Clive Cussler, is a non-profit, volunteer foundation dedicated to preserving our maritime heritage through the discovery, archaeological survey and conservation of shipwreck artifacts.

Mr. Wilbanks gave an interesting and informative slide presentation at our Banquet about his involvement during the summer of 2013 with the International Project. The Project was surveying the shipwrecked remains from the Invasion of Normandy by the Allied Forces in June 1944 (D-Day). Nova recorded the International Project and their film on the Invasion of Normandy will be shown on PBS-Nova.

All programs and services of the Conservation District, USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, and DNR-Land, Water and Conservation Division are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, marital status or handicap.

2013 ~ 2014 Earth Day Poster & Essay Contest

“Where Does Your Water Shed?”

The Colleton Conservation District is proud to recognize the winners in our poster, essay, and photo contest. We received 9 posters, 97 essays and 69 photos. The participating schools were: Colleton County Middle School, North Walterboro Christian Academy, and Colleton Preparatory Academy.



Poster Winners

The poster contest is a class project for kindergarten through 5th grade. Awards were presented to the winning classes by grade level. The winning teachers received certificates and were recognized at our Annual Banquet.

Mrs. Fisher's 5-K Preschool class at Colleton Preparatory Academy

Mrs. Kathy Houck's 1st Grade class at Colleton Preparatory Academy

Mrs. Martin's 2nd Grade class at North Walterboro Christian Academy

Mrs. Lisa Hanna's 3rd Grade class at North Walterboro Christian Academy

Mrs. Finney's 4th Grade class at Colleton Preparatory Academy

Mrs. Tracie Adam's 5th Grade class at North Walterboro Christian Academy



We would like to thank Mrs. Wydette Ackerman at North Walterboro Christian Academy and Mrs. Jill Burttram at Colleton Preparatory Academy for their support.

Essay Winners

photos by Fred Tritapoe

The theme for our Earth Day Essay Contest was “Where Does Your Water Shed?”. A total of 97 essays were received. Awards were presented at our Annual Banquet to the following winners in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades.

6th Grade Winners



1st Place ~ Francis Blubaugh
Colleton Preparatory Academy



2nd Place ~ Langley Harter
Colleton Preparatory Academy



3rd Place ~ Joshua Heastie
N Walterboro Christian Academy

7th Grade Winners



1st Place ~ Gracie Griffin
Colleton Preparatory Academy



2nd Place ~ Connor McMillan
Colleton Preparatory Academy



3rd Place ~ Dylan Kinard
Colleton Preparatory Academy

8th Grade Winners



1st Place ~ Lauren Chewning
Colleton Preparatory Academy

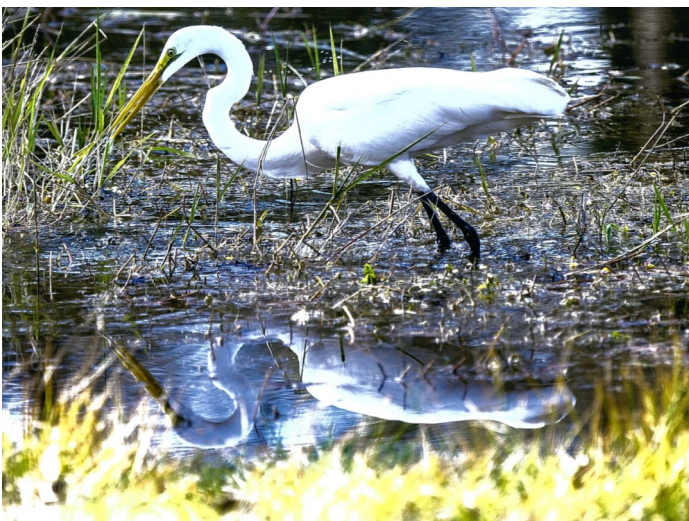


2nd Place ~ Erica Caldwell
N Walterboro Christian Academy



3rd Place ~ Emily Martin
Colleton Preparatory Academy

Photography Contest Winners



The Conservation District sponsors a photography contest for students in the 9th-12th grades. The categories to choose from were native wildlife, trees/plants, landscapes or rural life. The Photo contest is an individual project for students attending Colleton County Schools. We received 69 wonderful photo entries. 1st, 2nd, 3rd Place and Honorable Mention winners were recognized at our Annual Banquet.

1st Place ~ Scott Kramer
"Clover Leaf Farm"
Colleton Prep Academy

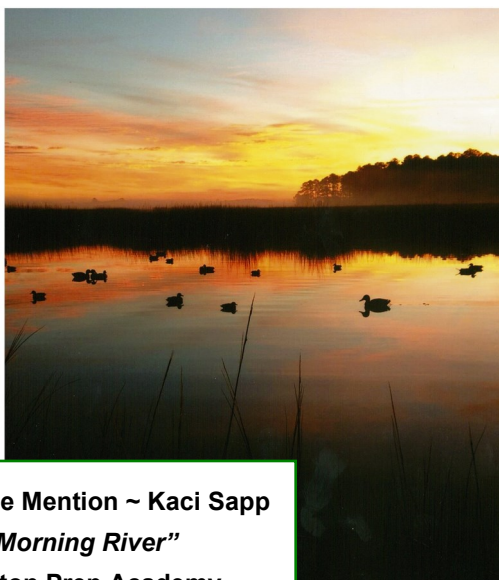
Photo Winners



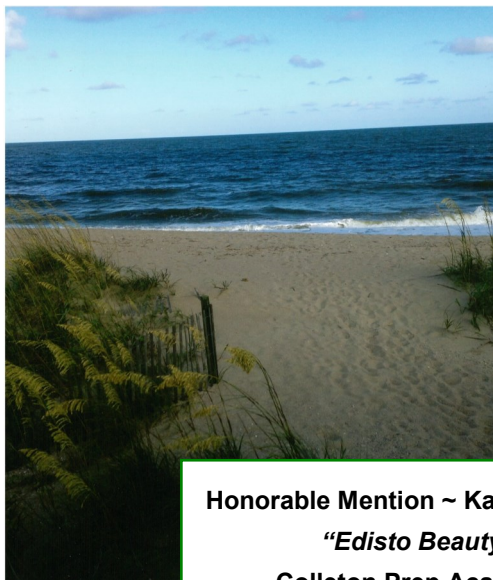
2nd Place ~ Connor Pye
"Sprouting Flowers"
 Colleton Prep Academy



3rd Place ~ Madison Avant
"Round O Oak"
 Colleton Prep Academy



Honorable Mention ~ Kaci Sapp
"Morning River"
 Colleton Prep Academy



Honorable Mention ~ Kayla Hayden
"Edisto Beauty"
 Colleton Prep Academy

Stewardship Week

"Dig Deeper-Mysteries in the Soil" was the theme for Stewardship Week. The Conservation District celebrated this observance with area churches to highlight the importance of protecting soil, one of our natural resources. Soil is an amazing substance. A complex mix of minerals, air, and water, soil also teems with countless micro-organisms, and the decaying remains of once-living things. "Soil is made of life and soil makes life".

The Soil Science Society of America describes soil this way: To the farmer, soil is where crops grow. To the engineer, soil is a foundation upon which to build. To the ecologist, soil supports communities of living things. To the archaeologist, soil holds clues to past cultures. To the city dweller, soil nurtures grass and gardens. To the soil scientist, soil is all of these things. Soil has been called "the skin of the earth" because it is the thin outermost layer of the Earth's crust. Like our own skin, we can't live without soil.

Rev. Gerald Mabry and Vice Chairman Gary Herndon organized a tour of the Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort. MWSS 273 welcomed our group with a slide presentation that highlighted the activities and conservation work that is performed by the Base Personnel. We gained an overall understanding of the important work that is performed on the Marine Corps Air Station.

Our group also enjoyed an informative bus tour narrated by LCpl Roethel. We returned home with a feeling of gratitude and appreciation to the dedicated and professional men and women of the Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort.

Rev. Mabry and the Conservation District also promoted the use of Stewardship resource materials in our area churches.

Thank you ~ Marion L. Rizer



After 29 years (1985-2014) of dedicated service to the Colleton Soil & Water Conservation District, Marion L. Rizer resigned on February 4, 2014.

Marion began his affiliation with the Colleton Conservation District in September 1985 when he was appointed by South Carolina Land Resources Conservation Commission to fill an elected commissioners position. In the November 1986 General Election he ran for the commissioner's position and won a 4-year term.

On February 1, 1987, the Conservation District Board elected Marion as Chairman. Marion served in this position until December 9, 2004. He was again elected Chairman January 22, 2013 and served until he resigned February 4, 2014.

Many years ago, Marion was asked why he wanted to be a Conservation District Commissioner and he said "As a farmer, I have great respect for the land and believe in conserving all natural resources for future generations. It is important work that we do and I enjoy being a part of this effort".

Today, he still believes a Commissioners work is important, but now is the time for the younger generation in Colleton County to step up and play a more active role in the conservation of our natural resources. Marion has assured the Colleton District Commissioners that he will always be a part of the conservation effort in Colleton County and will continue a working relationship with the Conservation District Board.

Thank you, Marion Rizer. We appreciate your 29 years of service and dedication to the Colleton Soil & Water Conservation District. We will miss you but we know we will always be able to find you on Rizer Farm.

Welcome ~ Joshua B. Jones

The Colleton Soil & Water Conservation District Commissioner's welcomes Joshua B. Jones to the Conservation District Board. On May 29, Joshua was appointed by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) Board to fill an unexpired elected commissioner's position.

Joshua grew up in the Lodge area of Colleton County and attended Andrew Jackson Academy High School (AJA). He graduated AJA in 1998 and continued his education at Clemson University. He graduated from Clemson in 2002 with a degree in Forest Resource Management and a minor in Business Administration. Currently he is employed at White Wood, Inc. in Walterboro as a Forester.

As a Forester, Joshua helps the landowners successfully manage their forest while protecting our natural resources. His love of outdoors, hunting and fishing, has made him realize that we can contribute and do our part in conserving our natural resources. In May of 2013 he became an Associate Commissioner and in May of 2014 he was appointed Commissioner. Joshua will join the other Board Members, I.M. Benton, Cleveland Hiott, Gary Herndon, Roger Harriett and together they will work to protect and conserve the natural resources in Colleton County.

Please join us in welcoming Joshua Jones to the Colleton Soil & Water Conservation District.



The 73rd Annual South Carolina Conservation Partnership Conference was held in Downtown Columbia on February 25-26, 2014 at the Marriott. The topic of the conference was "Conservationist and South Carolina's Sustainable Future"

The program was designed for all people interested in conservation - for landowners, conservationists, farmers, and natural resource professionals. The Conference topics were:

- **Conservation Education** presented by Steve Hein, Director of the Center of Wildlife Education at Georgia Southern University and Jennifer Majors, Supervisor of the Environmental Discovery Center at Lynches River Park,
- **Sustainable Forestry** presented by Henry Kodama, State Forester with the SC Forestry Commission and Dennis Bauknight a Pickens County Forest Landowner,
- **DNR's Groundwater Monitoring Network** presented by Ken Rentiers, Deputy Director and Scott Harder, Hydrologist with the SC Department of Natural Resource, and
- **Agri+Culture: SC's Farm-to-Table Movement** presented by Buz Kloot, Research Associate Professor at ESRI-USC and Amy Overstreet, SC NRCS Outreach Coordinator .

The Annual Conservation Partnership Conference is jointly sponsored by the SC Association of Conservation Districts, the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, the SC Department of Natural Resources, and the Soil and Water Conservation Society.

2013 ~ 2014 Affiliate Members

** new members

The Colleton Soil and Water Conservation District would like to thank our affiliate members who continue to generously donate and to welcome our new members. Your support helps provide educational programs for students and the public about conserving and protecting the natural resources in Colleton County. Let's all work together to make Colleton County a better place to live and work. We are a *non-profit organization* and your contribution is *tax deductible*.

Conservator

Hope Plantation

Benefactor

*AgSouth Farm Credit, ACA
Carolyn S. Godley
Coastal Electric Coop., Inc.
Cockfield Plantation**
Dr. Joseph F. Flowers
Loblolly Tree Farm, LP
Palmetto Rural Telephone Coop.
Rizer's Pork & Produce
Ruffin Farm Supply*

Contributing

*American Forestry Management
Beach Forest Management
BlackWater Civil Engineering **
Breland Hill Farm
Cheeha-Combahee Plantation
Colleton County Farm Bureau
Dr. Harold M. Rhodes**
Hill Tire Center
Lowcountry Soil Consulting
New York Life Insurance Co.
Norris & Mary Laffitte
Ravenwood Plantation **
Rhodes Oil Company, Inc.
White Wood, Inc.*

Supporting

*Bank of Walterboro
Benton's Feed, Seed & Garden
Donald J. Holmes CPA
Enterprise Bank of SC
Gregory & Mary Hudson
Henry & Becky Varn
Williams Farms LLC*

In Kind

Gladys M. Murray Flowers

Affiliate Membership ~ 2014-2015

Please check one:

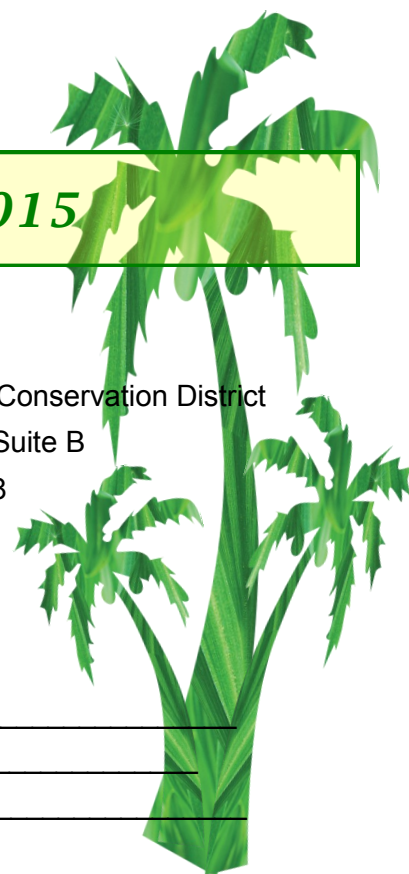
- ☐ Supporting Membership \$35.00
☐ Contributing Membership \$50.00
☐ Benefactor Membership \$100.00
☐ Conservator Membership \$200.00+
☐ Memorial/Honorarium for _____

Mail to:

Colleton Soil & Water Conservation District
531 Robertson Blvd., Suite B
Walterboro, SC 29488

How would you like your membership listed? Individual or Company

Name _____
 Company Name _____ Company Contact Person _____
 Address _____ City _____
 State _____ Zip Code _____ Donation Enclosed _____



NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service

The Conservation District relies on NRCS to provide technical assistance to landowners in Colleton County. Assistance is provided with implementation of conservation practices such as wildlife management, subsurface drainage, residue management, nutrient and pest management, prescribed grazing, wetland restoration, and other technical practices, which may require engineering surveys and designs. Last year, NRCS assisted 716 customers with conservation issues concerning agriculture, forestry, livestock management, soil management, wildlife, recreation, natural resource education, and engineering. NRCS is also involved with the administration of various cost share programs such as the EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program), the CSP (Conservation Stewardship Program), the HFRP (Healthy Forests Reserve Program), and the ACEP (Agricultural Conservation Easement Program). The Strikeforce Initiative was announced in March 2013. Colleton County was selected as 1 of 19 counties in South Carolina to qualify as a Strikeforce County. The initial application period produced 27 applications, and an additional 23 applications in FY 2014. In addition, NRCS provides technical assistance with the CRP (Conservation Reserve Program) and certain maintenance projects involving the Willow Swamp Watershed. NRCS personnel, upon request, can meet with producers/landowners to evaluate their resource concerns and develop conservation plans. The local NRCS Office is located at 531 Robertson Blvd., Walterboro and the phone number is 549-1821 (ext.3).

Cost Share Programs

Fred Tritapoe

Conservation Reserve Program - CRP provides landowners with the opportunity to retire cropland in environmentally sensitive areas. The continuous sign-up allows for the establishment of wildlife areas, trees, filter strips, and riparian buffers. The CP-33 (Quail Habitat Buffers) has provided Colleton County Landowners with incentives to establish native cover along the edge of crop fields. Several thousand acres have been retired from agricultural production and placed in the CRP. Several landowners have chosen to reenroll their expiring contracts during FY 2014. Colleton County had 7 additional CRP Contracts last year.



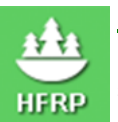
Environmental Quality Incentives Program - EQIP provides incentive payments up to 75% cost sharing for conservation practices such as microirrigation, erosion control structures, field borders, pasture and hayland practices, livestock management, and animal waste facilities. In the event an applicant is considered historically underserved, he or she may receive up to a 90% cost share rate. In Colleton County, there are currently 1,877 acres enrolled in this program. EQIP also provides for Limited Resource Farmers, New and/or Beginning Farmers, and Organic Farmers. Cost-share items include but are not limited to microirrigation, residue management, prescribed grazing, fencing, heavy use area establishment, livestock watering facility, forage and biomass planting, and record keeping. Several applications were approved under the EQIP-LLI (Longleaf Initiative) for planting longleaf pines during FY 2014.



Agriculture Conservation Easement Program - ACEP was established under the 2014 Farm Bill. It is a new program that consolidates three former programs– the Wetlands Reserve Program, Grassland Reserve Program, and the Farm & Ranch Land Protection Program. Landowners can establish permanent conservation easements on land offered and in return receive payment on the agricultural value of the land as well as 100 percent of the cost of restoration. Regardless of program application, all potential participants must meet eligibility requirements prior to receiving approval. A landowner must own the land 2 years in order to be eligible for the ACEP.



Conservation Stewardship Program – CSP maintains its role as part of the 2014 Farm Bill. This program provides incentives as a result of past conservation activity accomplishments. It also encourages producers to enhance their operations by implementing additional conservation activities in addressing our natural resource concerns.



Healthy Forests Reserve Program - HFRP is a voluntary program which encourages landowners to restore, enhance, and protect forestland resources on private land through easements (permanent or 30 years) and 10 year cost-share agreements. The primary objective of the HFRP is to promote the recovery of threatened and endangered species along with management of longleaf pine plantations.

Conservation Projects in Colleton

photos by Eddie Mitchell



Long Leaf Tree Planting ~ Stanley Mros



Irrigation Pipeline ~ B. L. Harriett



Prescribed Burning ~ Deep Bottom Farms



Tree Planting ~ Amanda E. Capers



Long Leaf Tree Planting ~ Cleveland C. Hiott III



Heavy Use Area ~ Bryan Farms LLC

Colleton Soil & Water Conservation District
531 Robertson Blvd., Suite B
Walterboro, SC 29488

Phone: 843-549-1821 (ext. 3)

Fax: 855-733-3585

The Colleton Soil and Water Conservation District Board meet on the fourth Tuesday of every month except November. Please call 549-1821 (ext. 3) for more information.

Conservation Projects in Colleton County

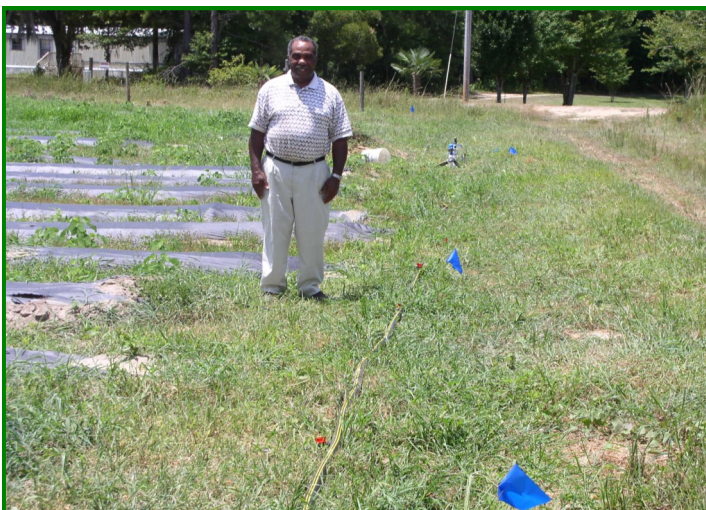
photos by Eddie Mitchell



Heavy Use Area ~ Charles W. Polk



Mulching ~ Ben Teasdel Jr.



Micro Irrigation ~ Ben Teasdel Jr.



Water Facility ~ Charles W. Polk